

Greetings. Since this is our April eShuffler, it means that May is nearly upon us. **And what happens in May?** More players are in the area and coming to the club. Weekday game time changes to 10:00 a.m. Monday game resumes for the summer (10:00 start time). And Swiss team games will be held one Sunday a month, the first being May 20.

**Local Tournaments (repeat reminder):** It's not too early to get the two local tournaments on your calendar.  The first one is our **Future Life Master Sectional**.  It will be held at the clubhouse on Saturday-Sunday June 23-24.  All those players who are not yet Life Masters and who have no more than 500 masterpoints as of June 1 are eligible to play.  Linda Dawson is the chair (lindadawson555@gmail.com) and Allison White is handling partnerships (allisonwhite49770@gmail.com).  The second is our **Tip of the Mitt Regional,**whichwe host every other year.  Again this year, it will be held at the Odawa Casino.  Opening session is Monday August 13, and it runs through Sunday August 19.  Chair is Mike Sears (mmsears@sprynet.com) and Julie Kennedy will handle partnerships (tandjken@centurylink.net).

**Congratulations!** We’ve been informed that four of our players have progressed in rank recently. Pat Steffes, Anne Cummins and Jim Cummins have become Sectional Masters, and Nancy Colbert has achieved the coveted rank of Life Master. Congratulations! (Our access to rank progression is limited, so please let us know if you or others have moved up in rank. We love to recognize those achievements.)

***Mike Sears Sez - Tip of the Month****–* **Competitive Bidding Strategy**

We all like to see our names higher on the ranking list for the session. Last month we discussed **Balancing** as a bidding tactic to help do that. In looking at this subject more broadly, we should recognize that it’s the score on each board that counts. Your objective for each board should be to maximize a positive score for you, or minimize a positive score for the opponents. Scoring 450 is better than scoring 420 or 170. Allowing the opponents to score 100 or 200 (e.g., going set 1 or 2 vulnerable) is better for you than allowing them to score 420 (e.g., making a game in a major). Obviously, the starting point for this is your knowing how to score!

Take the test:

• They’re vulnerable and we’re not. Is it better to let them play/make game in a major, or for us to go down 3 if we were to be doubled?

• We’re vulnerable and they’re not. Is it better to let them play/make game in a major, or for us to go down 2 if we were to be doubled?

• We’re vulnerable and they’re not. Is it better to let them play/make 2 of a major, or for us to go down 2 playing 3 of a minor?

• They’re vulnerable and we’re not. They’re bidding a major. We’re bidding a minor. They end up bidding a small slam. How many can we go down if we were to bid a grand slam in our minor (yes, we’ll be doubled!)? This answer brings this subject home to roost. If they make the small slam, they score 1430. If you bid 7 of your minor, get doubled and make 1, going set 6, you give up 1400 which will give you a good board!

A key element in this thinking is first to decide whether you believe that the opponents will make their bid. Please remember this important thought: it is ALWAYS better to receive points than to give points. So, if you believe that the opponents will not make their bid, allow them to proceed, set them and RECEIVE your points. If you believe that they will make their contract, then decide if you can minimize their points by you taking the bid and going set.

If you’re struggling with these answers, you should review “how to score.” You can’t make good competitive bidding decisions without being able to score.

A**rchived eShufflers**- Hope you've enjoyed this month's eShuffler.  All our previous ones are archived on the Petoskey Bridge Club's website.  You can go there directly by clicking [HERE](https://www.petoskeybridgeclub.com/newsletters).